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Amendments to the claims:

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.121(c) as revised effective July 30, 2003, please cancel claims 5, 14, 16 and 27-29, and amend claims 1, 3, 6, 11, 12 and 15, as indicated below. A complete listing of all of the claims in the application with the changes to the amended claims indicated and including the text of all pending and withdrawn claims is presented immediately below.

COMPLETE LISTING OF ALL CLAIMS IN THE APPLICATION

1. (Currently amended) An optical connection closure for use at a branch point in a fiber optic communications network to interconnect an optical fiber of a distribution cable with an optical fiber of a pre-connectorized fiber optic drop cable, the closure comprising:

a base;

a cover affixed to the base, the base and the cover defining an interior cavity;

at least one cable opening for receiving a portion of the distribution cable within the interior cavity; and

at least one connector port located within an external wall of the closure for receiving the optical fiber of the distribution cable on the inside of the closure and for receiving the pre-connectorized fiber optic drop cable on the outside of the closure; and

at least one splice tray positioned within the interior cavity for splicing the optical fiber of the distribution cable to a pigtail to create a connectorized optical fiber that is routed to the at least one connector port on the inside of the closure.

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2. (Withdrawn) The closure according to claim 1, wherein the at least one connector port is located within the base.
3. (Currently amended) The closure according to claim 1, further comprising an end wall and wherein ~~the at least one cable opening and~~ the at least one connector port are located within the end wall.
4. (Withdrawn) The closure according to claim 1, wherein the at least one connector port is located within the cover.
5. (Canceled).
6. (Currently amended) The closure according to ~~claim 5~~ claim 1, further comprising a connector adapter sleeve disposed within the at least one connector port for aligning and maintaining the connectorized optical fiber and the pre-connectorized fiber optic drop cable in physical contact.
7. (Original) The closure according to claim 1, wherein the closure is deployed in one of an aerial location, a buried location and an above ground location.
8. (Original) The closure according to claim 1, wherein one of the base and the cover is breathable.

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9. (Original) The closure according to claim 1, wherein the base and the cover are sealed and pressurized.

10. (Original) The closure according to claim 1, wherein the at least one connector port is configured to permit a field technician to connect, disconnect and reconfigure the pre-connectorized fiber optic drop cable without entering the closure.

11. (Currently amended) An optical connection closure for use at a branch point in a fiber optic communications network, the closure comprising:

a distribution cable comprising at least one connectorized optical fiber and a mid-span access location;

a base;

a cover affixed to the base such that the base and the cover define an interior cavity;

an end wall defining at least one cable opening for receiving the distribution cable such that the closure is mounted on a portion of the distribution cable including the mid-span access location; and

at least one connector port located in an external wall of one of the base, the cover and the end wall, the connector port receiving the at least one connectorized optical fiber on the inside of the closure;

wherein the mid-span access location is factory-prepared such that the at least one optical fiber of the distribution cable is preterminated and wherein the preterminated optical fiber of the distribution cable is connectorized in the field.

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12. (Currently amended) ~~The closure according to claim 11,~~ An optical connection closure for use at a branch point in a fiber optic communications network, the closure comprising:

a distribution cable comprising at least one connectorized optical fiber and a mid-span access location;

a base;

a cover affixed to the base such that the base and the cover define an interior cavity;

an end wall defining at least one cable opening for receiving the distribution cable such that the closure is mounted on a portion of the distribution cable including the mid-span access location; and

at least one connector port located in an external wall of one of the base, the cover and the end wall, the connector port receiving the at least one connectorized optical fiber on the inside of the closure;

wherein the mid-span access location is field-prepared and the at least one optical fiber of the distribution cable is terminated and connectorized in the field.

13. (Original) The closure according to claim 12, wherein the terminated optical fiber of the distribution cable is spliced to a pigtail.

14. (Canceled).

15. (Currently amended) The closure according to ~~claim 14~~ claim 11, wherein the preterminated optical fiber of the distribution cable is spliced to a pigtail.

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16. (Canceled).

17. (Original) The closure according to claim 11, wherein the at least one connector port receives a pre-connectorized drop cable on the outside of the closure.

18. (Original) The closure according to claim 17, wherein the at least one connector port is configured to permit a field technician to connect, disconnect and reconfigure the pre-connectorized drop cable without entering the closure.

19. (Original) The closure according to claim 17, further comprising a connector adapter sleeve disposed within the at least one connector port for aligning and maintaining the connectorized optical fiber and the pre-connectorized drop cable in physical contact.

20. (Original) The closure according to claim 11, further comprising a shelf affixed to the base within the interior cavity and at least one splice tray positioned on the shelf and wherein the shelf is movable relative to the base between an opened position for providing access to the splice tray and a closed position for storing the splice tray.

21. (Original) The closure according to claim 11, wherein the closure is deployed in one of an aerial location, a buried location and an above ground location.

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22. (Original) The closure according to claim 11, wherein one of the base and the cover is breathable.

23. (Original) The closure according to claim 11, wherein the base and the cover are sealed and pressurized.

24. (Withdrawn) An optical fiber connection closure for use at a branch point in a fiber optic communications network including a distribution cable comprising a plurality of optical fibers and a mid-span access location provided along the length of the distribution cable, the closure comprising;

a base;

a cover affixed to the base such that the base and the cover define an interior cavity, the cover movable relative to the base between a closed position and an opened position for providing access to the interior cavity;

an end wall cooperating with the base and comprising at least a portion of at least one cable opening for receiving the distribution cable within the interior cavity defined by the base and the cover;

a plurality of connector ports located within the base and having an inside adapted for receiving certain of the optical fibers of the distribution cable having connectors mounted upon the ends thereof from within the interior cavity and having an outside adapted for receiving a respective pre-connectorized drop cable.

25. (Withdrawn) The closure according to claim 24, wherein the distribution cable is received within the cable opening in a lengthwise direction and the connector ports are oriented

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such that the pre-connectorized drop cables extend away from the closure in a direction generally parallel to the distribution cable.

26. (Withdrawn) The closure according to claim 24, further comprising a connector adapter sleeve disposed within the at least one connector port and biased for aligning and maintaining the connectorized optical fiber and the pre-connectorized drop cable in physical contact.

Claims 27-29 (Canceled).

30. (Withdrawn) An optical fiber connection closure for use at a branch point in a fiber optic communications network including a distribution cable comprising a plurality of optical fibers and a mid-span access location provided along the length of the distribution cable, the closure comprising;

a base;

a cover affixed to the base such that the base and the cover define an interior cavity, the cover movable relative to the base between a closed position and an opened position for providing access to the interior cavity;

an end wall cooperating with the base and comprising at least a portion of at least one cable opening for receiving the distribution cable within the interior cavity defined by the base and the cover;

a plurality of connector ports located within the cover and having an inside adapted for receiving certain of the optical fibers of the distribution cable having connectors mounted upon the ends thereof from within the interior cavity and having an outside adapted for receiving a respective pre-connectorized drop cable.

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31. (Withdrawn) The closure according to claim 30, wherein the distribution cable is received within the cable opening in a lengthwise direction and the connector ports are oriented such that the pre-connectorized drop cables extend away from the closure in a direction generally parallel to the distribution cable.

32. (Withdrawn) The closure according to claim 30, further comprising a connector adapter sleeve disposed within the at least one connector port and biased for aligning and maintaining the connectorized optical fiber and the pre-connectorized drop cable in physical contact.